



SEMAINE
DE LA
CRITIQUE
LOCARNO
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SWISS
FILM AWARD
2018

NOMINATION
IN TWO CATEGORIES



July 2017: Thousands of Congolese came to see the film as part of previews in Eastern Congo. ©2017 Fruitmarket, Langfilm

THE CONGO TRIBUNAL

‘RISE UP! WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR!’

(Berlin, 01 Feb. 2018) **After sensational film screenings followed by symposia in eastern Congo in July 2017 and the celebrated premiere at the 70th Locarno Film Festival, the documentary film ‘The Congo Tribunal’ will open in cinemas on 16 November and make an exclusive tour of theatres in Germany and Switzerland, accompanied by prominent guests, protagonists from the film and a virtual reality installation.**

When Milo Rau and his team presented their new documentary film ‘The Congo Tribunal’ to the protagonists, local authorities and the general population in the eastern Congolese civil war zone this summer, the reaction was overwhelming. Thousands of Congolese came to attend previews of the film. **‘This film is the last cry of appeal to the Congolese people. Rise up! What are you waiting for!’** said a viewer to one of the journalists who travelled to cover the event. Alternative Nobel Prize winner **Denis Mukwege**, head of Panzi Hospital in Bukavu, called it a film **‘of inestimable value to our country.’**

On the occasion of the world premiere, the Süddeutsche Zeitung wrote: **‘The film thrusts the viewer into the middle of the horror.’** WOZ (Die Wochenzeitung) called the film a ‘far-reaching intervention into a reality that is still unfolding.’ **Milo Rau** explained to Schweizer Radio SRF: ‘The film has made an impossibility possible. The government was indicted, two ministers were forced to resign. **The people saw that you can change things!**’



For over 20 years, Congo has been in the grip of a hardly-comprehensible civil war that has transformed an area the size of Western Europe into a hell on earth. Sometimes called the 'Third World War' because of the direct or indirect involvement of all of the world's major powers, this war in Congo has already claimed as many as six million lives. The director **Milo Rau succeeded** in holding a symbolic tribunal in the heart of the war zone with all of the involved parties – the first such tribunal in the history of this conflict. In remote villages and inaccessible mining areas and during the days of negotiation, his documentary film draws **an unvarnished portrait of this massive economic war** by means of probing investigations. The film deals with a conflict of global magnitude that is not about victory or defeat, but rather the question of what the wealth of the First World is actually worth to us.

'If I had to choose just one of all the theatre and film projects that I've done, it would be "The Congo Tribunal". **The film gathers all of the interests, and also all of the formats**, that have been driving me the last 15 years,' says Milo Rau in a director's statement.

'**The Congo Tribunal**' is a **transmedia project** that serves many different formats. It is a **large-scale interactive Web project** that has grown out of a theatre event and documentary film. The Web format extends the content and narratives of the tribunal into digital space to address a user group that can't necessarily be counted among the classical theatre audience or among cinemagoers. The idea is to make the overwhelming, almost incomprehensible facts experienceable in a personal, interactive way to these users, and to make the larger global context visible. The digital audience experiences the 'unseen' of the investigated cases in a technically innovative **docu-game** and a virtual reality installation that's a result of a unique creative collaboration between the **Congolese political illustrator Kayene** and German games developers. In connection with the docu-game, a comprehensive online archive brings together strands of information, hearings and analyses. In November 2017, before the cinema launch in Germany and Switzerland, director Milo Rau will put all of the film material from both tribunals online, so that people in Congo and elsewhere can see the entirety of both of three-day hearings in Bukavu and Berlin. Not only will this make this material accessible worldwide, but it will also ultimately create an objectivity that will stand in contrast to the subjectivity of the film.

The basis of the documentary is the eponymous theatre project – 'one of the most ambitious pieces of political theatre ever staged' (The Guardian) – which in spring 2015 brought together more than 60 witnesses and experts in Bukavu in eastern Congo and in Berlin, in the tradition of Jean-Paul Sartre and Bertrand Russel's 'Vietnam Tribunal'. Over six days, Congolese government and opposition politicians, military officers and rebels, UN and World Bank functionaries, major mining companies and typical Congolese citizens, philosophers, economists and lawyers appeared before an international jury. While the hearings in eastern Congo concentrated on three local cases, in Berlin the focus was placed on the involvement of the EU, the World Bank, the international community and multinational corporations. 'Where politics fails, only art can help,' was the assessment of the German weekly Die Zeit. **'For the first time, the victims had a voice,'** said the Congolese opposition politician and tribunal witness **Vital Kamerhe**, who argued for a continuation of the theatre tribunal at the political level.

The approach formulated in Rau's opening speech at 'The Congo Tribunal' – 'to side with the disenfranchised, those who have no lobby, to make audible the voice of, and to listen to those who are never heard' – was further pursued in **'General Assembly'** (Schaubühne am Lehniner Platz, Berlin). From **3 to 5 November 2017**, 60 delegates from around the world were gathered in the German capital to challenge the newly elected German Parliament – as representatives of all actors who are impacted



by German policies yet do not have a political voice. The 'General Assembly', accompanied by a group of international political observers, culminated in the passage of the 'Charter for the 21st Century'.

The film 'The Congo Tribunal' had its **debut in cinemas nationwide** in Germany on **16 November** and in Switzerland on 23 November 2017.

Dates and honours

Locarno Festival - Semaine de la Critique

DokLeipzig - honourable mention

CADRAGE 2017 - Zürcher Filmpreis „Bester Dokumentarfilm"

IFF Rotterdam 2018

Solothurner Filmtage 2018

LOLA@Berlinale - feb., 20th & 21st

ARTEFACT@STUK Leuven, feb. 13th to march, 1st

AKADEMIE DER KÜNSTE Berlin - march, 9th

STROOM the Hague, march 10th to april, 8th

CPH:DOX - march, 15th to 25th

MOVIES THAT MATTER, the Hague - march, 23rd to 31st

Material on 'The Congo Tribunal':

Press material:

<http://www.realfictionfilme.de/filme/das-kongo-tribunal/index.php>

<http://vincafilm.ch/katalog/34-das-kongo-tribunal/>

'The Congo Tribunal' (book), press version (publisher: Verbrecher Verlag):

http://www.augustinpr.de/tl_files/AugustinPR_Theme/Dokumente/20170810_Rau_KongoTribunal_Press_efahne.pdf

Trailer:

<https://www.facebook.com/kongotribunal/videos/vb.746655822044140/1531972040179177/?type=2&theater>

Website: <http://www.the-congo-tribunal.com>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/kongotribunal/>

ARTE Metropolis report on the film screening in Congo (17 Sep. 2017)

<http://sites.arte.tv/metropolis/de/milo-rau-metropolis-0>

'The Congo Tribunal' (film) at DOKLeipzig:

<https://filmfinder.dok-leipzig.de/de/film/?ID=17443&title=Das+Kongo+Tribunal>

Interactive Web game 'Witness J' at DOKLeipzig:

[https://filmfinder.dok-](https://filmfinder.dok-leipzig.de/de/film/?ID=19517&title=Das+Kongo+Tribunal:+Zeuge+J+&+Die+Hearings)

[leipzig.de/de/film/?ID=19517&title=Das+Kongo+Tribunal:+Zeuge+J+&+Die+Hearings](https://filmfinder.dok-leipzig.de/de/film/?ID=19517&title=Das+Kongo+Tribunal:+Zeuge+J+&+Die+Hearings)

Online:

<http://www.fruitmarket.de/>

<http://www.langfilm.ch/>

<http://international-institute.de/>

THE CONGO TRIBUNAL is a film, theatre and transmedia production of Fruitmarket, Langfilm and IIPM – International Institute of Political Murder

Script and direction: Milo Rau // **Research and casting** – Eva-Maria Bertschy // **Set design** – Anton Lukas //

Assistant direction – Mirjam Knapp // **Camera** – Thomas Schneider // **Sound** – Marco Teufen, Jens Baudisch //



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Editing – Katja Dringenberg // **Production management** Kirsten Schauries, Eva-Karen Tittmann // **Recording production** – Mascha Euchner-Martinez // **Executive Producer / Transmedia Producer** – Sebastian Lemke // **Producers** – Arne Birkenstock, Olivier Zobrist, Milo Rau

The film is a German-Swiss co-production of Fruitmarket Arts & Media and Langfilm with IIPM, Swiss Radio and Television (SRF) - SRG SSR and ZDF in cooperation with ARTE.

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Distribution: Real Fiction Filmverleih (Germany) and Vinca Film (Switzerland)